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American Criticism of
Schiller to 1846

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AMERICAN CRITICISM OF SCHILLER TO 1846

BY

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A. B. Southern University, Greensboro, Ala., 1905

THESIS

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Elizabeth Littleton

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American Criticism of Schiller Until 1846.

Introduction.

To appreciate justly, that is, not to depreciate unjustly the early American criticism of Schiller, it is necessary to get a clear sympathetic conception of the critics and the time in which they lived. Their criticisms for the most part, were as contradictory and as narrow as their religious controversies, so that as literary critics they are valueless, but as a partial index to the country's cultural growth and development their work is inestimable.

At the beginning of the period which we are examining, Virginia was the boasted mother of presidents. Her sons gave their talents to the making of a nation not made with pen and ink. Writing was not considered an honorable calling for a gentleman.[#] The manor house, the fox hunting parsons, the fair ladies and gay gentlemen have become the chivalry of the New World. In New England the tavern took the place of the manor house. The clergy were the loved and feared teachers of the people. Earnest, god-fearing men they were, but oftentimes, most narrow and bigoted.

In New England such books had appeared as Willard's "Complete Book of Divinity", nine hundred and fourteen pages in close compact type. No such book was written in the South. Mr. Byrd

[#] - Tyler's History of American Literature (1676-1765) Vol. I, 36

G. C. Putman & Sons. 1879, New York.

of Westover, Va., who was said to have had the best library in America at that time, had written a humorous and still interesting little book of one hundred and fifty pages, entitled, "Present State of Virginia". In this, a little sarcastically, perhaps, he speaks of New England as a "receptacle of dissenters, an Amsterdam of religion", and of Virginia as the happy retreat of true Britons and churchmen".

In 1800, the people in the North were the descendants of these dissenters and Roundheads, and the people in the south of these Britons and cavaliers. Virginia culture was English culture. The North had developed a distinct type.

Mr. Jefferson had tried to sweep away the feudal system, but primogeniture in education was an everyday fact. Every "first family in Virginia" sent the eldest son to England and the younger sons either to Princeton or to William and Mary. Dr. Rice, a prominent clergyman of Richmond, Va., made a calculation in 1800, and found that two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were sent annually out of Virginia to educate her sons at a foreign school. Books and libraries were not abundant but what books they had were well selected. It was the custom for the London agent to send back with the proceeds from the tobacco a pipe of Madeira and a certain amount of current literature. Hence every now and then may be found in some old, out-of-the-way country house, the rare, first edition of an old book.

Charles Brockden Brown writes[#], "Ill informed persons might

[#] - 1806-07 American Register and General Repository, New York, Vol. I, 26.

draw false conclusions from the scarcity of original books among us. America is doubtless as large a mart for printed publications as any other country in the world. The proportion of readers is not exceeded in England and in Germany". He also boasts that "there are twenty to thirty publishing towns in the United States". As this writer says, we find the first quarter of the century full of reprints from England, of translations of French books as well as of the best English books. Politically, America was free. Intellectually she was tied to England's apron strings.

A most interesting little book from Georgetown, Virginia, "Essays on Various Subjects of Taste, Morals, National Policy", written by a citizen of Virginia, 1822, reviewed in North American Review, Vol. 149, 506, gives a short account of the time of which we are treating. The citizen says the reading and reflecting portion of America outweighs the writing and book making part. "Paper is dear; the capital invested in manufacture and sale of books is small." The cheap reprints from England supplied the demand. "The North is to the South what England is to America. The greater density of population which lay deep in the national character of these reflected sections of the country have produced a much greater external literary activity to the north than to the south of the Potomac." Almost all books printed in America were printed in the North. But the Citizen claims that "most of the books printed in England and America found their way to the most secluded plantation of the Blue Ridge."

In 1800 it was impossible to learn German in Boston.[#] There was so little intercourse between Germany and America that no need for the spoken language was felt. Things German were held in such light esteem that J. C. Cabal, connected with University of Virginia, returned from his visit to Germany (1803-'06) greatly surprised that the Germans were, in many things, far in advance of England, and that America could wisely follow Germany in many educational matters. Aaron Burr visited Weimar in 1810 and found that the only Americans known there were two South Carolinians, J. R. Poinsett and a Mr. Smith.

New England education in the beginning of the century was classical. As we have seen, no modern languages were taught in New England. Harvard was the leading school in the North and Harvard was at that time little better than a high school. The clergy, who were the leaders had absolutely no correct idea of German literature. For fear of corrupting the youth, they prohibited its study.^{##} Dr. Holmes says,^{##} "The Yankee clergy formed something like a Brahmin caste, poor in worldly goods, but autocratic in power." Just as they compelled the first president of Harvard to resign because he did not believe in baptism by immersion so they ruled and guided public opinion.

[#] - Wendell: Literary History of America, 296. Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1901.

^{##} - Wendell: Literary History of America, 235, Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1901.

Nevertheless, the clergy, the blind and dogmatic, dictatorial and autocratic, were true to the best that they knew. The genuine Yankee yearns for Truth and when he seems to have found her, worships. They firmly believed the theatre the work of the devil and that all souls who were lovers of the stage would burn forever in fire and brimstone. The preacher was looked upon as the "chosen of the Lord", a superior being. Even until 1885, names of all Harvard graduates who had become ministers were printed in italics in the Quinquennial catalogue.

In the South the influence of the clergy was not so great. They never held the people as they did in the North. They were not the fire and hell preachers as were their brethern of the colder climate. A southern minister could not have kept his congregation kneeling for two hours as Channing is said to have once done in Boston.[#]

With 1817 a marked change in the interest in German literature is noticeable. With this change comes the substitution of German methods for English.

Dr. Goodnight of Wisconsin^{##} gives to Tichnor and Everett all the glory of this change. He also states that George Calvert was the first southern₂ to study in Germany.^{###} Both of these statements are incorrect. The University of Virginia was the first American institution to throw off the shackles of England and this was

^{###} - Goodnight: German Literature in America, page 99.

^{##} - Goodnight German Literature in America, page 33.

[#] - Wendell: Literary History of America, 235. Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1901.

due to the influence of Cabal and Jefferson. Cabal's part in the furtherance of better days in education is so important and so little recognized that it is not out of place to give a few facts concerning him.

He was born in Virginia in 1778 of a distinguished father, was graduated from William and Mary, traveled in Europe (1803o'06) and studied in more than one leading University. To him belongs the honor of being the first American to study abroad, elsewhere than in England. While in Switzerland, he visited Pestalogzi and here began the connection of the University of Virginia with great men. On his return (1817) he met Jefferson and from this date began an intimacy which lasted until Jefferson's death. Together they worked for the founding of the University of Virginia. Aug. 1, 1818 the Commission on Education sat at Rockfish Gap in the Blue Ridge. After much wire-pulling, and thru the influence of Cabal and Jefferson ten professorships were recommended; viz., (1) Ancient Languages, (2) Modern Languages, (3) Pure Mathematics, (4) Physics, (5) Physico-Mathematics, (6) Botany and Zoology, (7) Anatomy and Medicine, (8) Government and Political Economy, (9) Law, Municipal, (10) Ideology; Ethics. They were not able to find men in America to fill these chair; accordingly, Jefferson sent to Europe. No questions were asked as to the religion of these first professors. Mar. 7, 1825, the University of Virginia formally opened with the five foreign professors and forty students. The other chairs were filled by Americans. Students kept coming in until Sept. 30, 1825 there were one hundred and sixteen. Among the

foreign teachers was the first German professor in America to hold a full professorship, Dr. Blaeterman. The correspondence of Cabal and Jefferson show what a strong hold German thought had gotten on their educational system.[#]

In 1815 George Ticknor and Edward Everett went to University of Göttingen. They returned in 1817 and in 1819 Ticknor was made first professor at Harvard University; Everett professor of Greek. Thru their influence, Dr. Charles Follen was made, in 1826, professor of German.

The history of the North American Review also shows what an influence was exerted by the study of German. Especially, in the criticisms of Schiller, which appeared therein, from time to time, do we see the growth of the modern conception of criticism. As soon as the Göttingen men returned and began to throw their influence on the side of German literature, the Review was changed in all but name.

Schiller, thru his young defenders, influenced the Americans more than did any other German writer; even more than Goethe. G Goethe, they could not understand for they could not reconcile his private life with their idea of a genius. Altho during our period, Goethe is referred to in the magazines twelve times more than is Schiller, from Schiller there are forty more poems translated.

[#] - Statemen's concerning Cabla are found in John Hopkins University Studies, Vol. VII, 298. English Culture in Virginia.

Wm. P. Trent.

CHAPTER ONE.

BEFORE THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW (1815)

While Coleridge and Scott were students at Christ College, Mackenzie[#], who knew German only thru French translations, there delivered his lecture on "The Robbers" which is famous for having inspired the two gifted young writers. He said, "No modern poet seems to possess powers so capable of bending the mind before him, of arousing the feelings by the elevation of his sentiments, or thrilling them with the terror of the imagination." This is the first mention of "The Robbers" which we find in the English language. The honor of the first performance in the English language belongs to America, where, in New York, May 14, 1795, in Dunlap's Theatre, it was played most successfully, and the company pronounced by Dunlap in his "History of the American Theatre", unequal.

The criticism^{##} appearing after this performance was doubtless not written by a spectator, for the men who wrote at that date were, with few exceptions, either clergymen or orthodox laymen, and these two classes did not attend theatres. The critic calls Schiller a poet of "middle rank"; an historian inferior to the best English and French Historians, unhappily mentions the "Geisterseher" as his "best piece of work", and says that he married his wife thru pity.

Even tho he might be so ignorant in regard to Schiller that he did not even know his name, a man who had read his writings

[#] - Americana Germanica 1902, Vol. II, 153.

^{##} - New York Magazine, May, 1795, Vol. VI.

understandingly would not have said that the author was one to marry his wife thru pity. The critic, on the other hand, must not be judged too harshly. It was characteristic of the time that in England and in America, Schiller was known only thru translations of "The Robbers". "These translations", says Dunlap in his History of the American Theatre, "are so mutilated and mangled as to give no adequate idea of the great German poet". We must charge the translators, as well as the critic, with a sad lack of the knowledge of just criticism.

The history of the American Theatre in Boston, and the history of the Early American Criticism of Schiller, go hand in hand as a history of the breaking down of puritanic standards. The above mentioned criticism of "The Robbers" is the stern and rigid New England view concerning every playwright. In Boston, theatres were prohibited until 1793 and the law against them was then repealed with great opposition. The mere fact that Schiller wrote for the stage was enough to prejudice against him, the representative men, the clergy. The puritan strain may be traced from this notice to some years after the limit set for this paper.

In the South, owing to conditions of life, living on great landed estates miles apart, the people were not incessant theatre goers. It is interesting to note, however, that the first play performed in America was performed by a London company in Williamsburg, Va., 1652, and theatre going was at no time prohibited by law.

Altho 1853 is beyond the limit set for this paper a review of "Hagenbach's Ecclesiastical History of the 18th and 19th Century"[#] so well expresses the view point of the critics during the time of which we treat that we quote directly. "In fact, it is certain that modern christian Apologetics may adduce from the writings of Goethe a far greater number of confirmatory passages than those of Schiller in which heresy is everywhere apparent." The article is a eulogy on Goethe. The following is characteristic of the writer.[#] "Also in the province of practical religion, Goethe as it regards insight into existing relations, showed hi self practical. Schiller on the contrary, generally impractical; Schiller, e.g., dreamed of improving the world by means of the theatre, he commanded the theatre as it were a second church. In conformity with these views the clergy of that period introduced poetic phrases and theatrical declamation into the pulpit. But Goethe rebuked this mischief in a most masterly manner in his 'Faust'". He then inaptly quotes from the scene in which Wagner says to Faust, "I have often heard it boasted that an actor may teach a parson", and Faust replies, "Yes, when the parson is an actor as sometimes happens".

In 1832, American Quarterly Observer Vol. II, 228, one laments that a man of Schiller's genius should have devoted so much of his time to "an amusement that is at war with good taste". Such an eminent scholar as F. H. Hedge bemoans the fact^{##} that Schiller de-

[#] - National Magazine, New York, Vol. I, 326. Christianity as Depicted by Goethe and Schiller. By F. H. Hedge.

^{##} - Christian Examiner Vol. XVI, May 1834.

voted his genius to a department of art so "questionable in its tendency and so surely devoted to decay."

In the Portfolio Vol. I, 1806, appeared a polemic against Schiller pronounced as fine by the editor, Joseph Dennie. Several notices and some adverse criticism appeared in other magazines. Diametrically opposed to these and noticeable because it stands out in bold relief among so much unfavorable criticism is a short article in 1807, Vol. IV, Monthly Anthology. "There is no doubt there is some raving and theatrical declamation in the tragedy of 'The Robbers', but I do pity the man who is not melted by its tenderness and roused by its energies". This article takes about the same stand as Mackenzie did in his lecture above quoted. It is only two columns in length but gives a concise and mostly fair characterization of the main features. The band of Robbers themselves are discussed and altho "rascals" yet, considering the state of society, the critic asserts that they are, in a measure, excusable for their rascality--"common disorders committed by the strong, necessary consequences of barbarism, than criminal aberrations from moral virtue". The reviewer could not have had a wide scope, nor been thoroughly cognizant of the subject with which he was dealing for he goes on to say, "The robbers in this play are eager to sacrifice the infamous Charles and in fact he is buried in the tomb he had prepared for his father." However, in another line, he speaks of Francis and says, "Great art was displayed in his manner of deceiving his father and his subsequent actions make him the finished hero of vice." What more could be added to the following! "The language of this play is generally natural. It is strong in a high degree and power ully

impresses the dictates of revenge, the emotions of pity and terror".

From the first there was a small faction who were admirers of Schiller. How large that faction was cannot be said for they have left little trace of their existence. They were apparently sadly in the minority for the men who wrote did not, in the first of the century, understand him in the smallest particular.

In 1816 ~~Port~~^{Feb} Vol. II, appeared an article on the State of Polite Literature in Germany in which, to the everlasting shame of the writer, Kotzebue is said to be far superior to Schiller and to the latter are applied the adjectives, "rant, puerility, frenzy, poverty of genius and perversion of taste."

It has been claimed that during the first years of the century, Schiller was known in America only thru the number of translations and reprints of London editions. Of the Robbers there were four reprints, N. Y., 1793; Baltimore, 1802, 1808 (?), 1825; The Ghostseer, Philadelphia, 1800 (?); Cabale und Liebe, Baltimore, 1802; Fiesco, 1802; Wallenstein, N. Y., 1805; Harper's Daughter or Cabale und Liebe, 1813-- No mention is found of these except of "The Robbers", and it is mentioned by a prejudiced class. That there were so many reprints of the same author shows at least that he was read. The place of printing also shows that they were not printed in the shadow of a New England pulpit.

CHAPTER TWO.

From North American Review to Carlyle (1833)

When Ticknor and Everett went to Germany they took with them F. H. Hedge, then a boy of twelve. They returned in 1817 and formed the nucleus of a pro-German party. The North American Review was their organ. The American Quarterly Observer was the first to join their party and later The Southern Literary Messenger, Southern Rose and Southern Literary Journal, the outlets of some of our best American poets, were appreciative and at times scholarly in their reviews.

The first review of Schiller by an American Appeared in 1821 in Literary and Scientific Repository, N. Y.[#] Prof. Goodnight of University of Wisconsin, in his admirable thesis on German Literature in American Magazines Prior to 1846, says it to be "an intelligent appreciation of Schiller as an historian, dramatist, and lyric poet." This was contained in the first three pages. The remainder of the review is of little intrinsic value. The poems translated, the following a striking example, speak for themselves.

As sprung from a mine
 Rushed a tiger thru,
 And the lion beholding,
 He fairly polled.

In 1823 in Vol. 16, 182, of the North American Review, Bancroft reviewed and translated, fairly creditably, some of Schiller's minor poems. Everett reviewed Henry Doering's Life of Schiller.

[#] - Not in University of Illinois Library.

Everett speaks of "The Robbers" somewhat as does Mackenzie, as "the highest point of vigor, if not of maturity, the most powerful if not the best of his productions". The characters he says are "well drawn", the language is "nervous and energetic, sometimes beyond the limits of good taste, but even in its faults of this sort we perceive at once, the excess of real force and not the counterfeit vigor of ambitious weakness", the manner has the merit of "entire originality". The great defect of the play is the unnaturalness of Earl Moor, unnatural because "too wicked to be so good and attractive". Faults of this kind he asserts "tend to corrupt the taste of the public". Here we see Everett's training. The early New Englanders could not appreciate an artistically drawn picture of human wickedness. The devil must have horns, never a dress suit.

Bancroft, in a way, disagrees with Everett for he claims that Schiller is at his best in his minor poems. We perceive the influence of the Anti-Robbers party when he writes that in Schiller's early works his mind seemed "in a state of excitement", also, "in moral speculations there is nothing of the tranquility which belongs to a mind already conversant with these subjects." He then compares Goethe and Schiller to Schiller's advantages. If we exchange the names we approach nearer the modern idea of the truth. "The characters and feeling of Schiller as an individual, appear thruout his poetry-----Schiller reflects in his poems the feelings of others---The character of Goethe never appears in his verse, that of Schiller presents itself continually." He claims that "Fridolin" is his best ballad, and that as a rule, Schiller's ballads are more pleasing than Bürger's and Goethe's.

Everett says "The Thirty Years War" is "little better than a fragment"-----"The Maid of Orleans is generally considered remarkable and attractive". Then he goes on to say that "some of his minor poems would alone give him high rank as a poet". "The Walk", he says, "is least attractive to me----with the exception of "The Robbers" all his works are distinguished by a pure morality." The last statement is characteristic of the man and his part of the century. Those two reviews are so enthusiastic that at times they drift into mental intoxication. They were written by two of the most prominent young men of Boston, influential and popular, therefore they were received and accepted in the main, and became the prime factors in preparing the way for Carlyle. A more sane article appeared in September, 1828, Vol. IV, 181, Am. Quar. Review. "Wallenstein" is called "the grand results of Schiller's historical study. 'William Tell' one of the most remarkable plays ever written." "The Robbers" is spoken of as "a marvel". It was composed by only a boy, so it describes extremes, everything is sketched in bold and glaring colors; all vices and virtues are exhibited in their greatest excesses. It is a monstrous production; but spirit and genius move in it and impart to it permanent life." To the early critics poetry was not true poetry unless it contained some moral teaching. The reviewer states Schiller's theory in a partial, necessarily superficial manner, but it is of great value to our understanding of the development of the esteem and theory of poetry in America. The reviewer seems to agree with what he takes to be Schiller's theory. He says, "His theory of poetry led him to consider beauty as something independent of the passions which it can incite." This was a

distinct advance from the New England idea that the poet should bring us sugar-coated morals, as it were. He concludes, "The poet was, in his mind, a superior being upon whom the bright sunshine of inspiration poured directly from above; he might indeed stoop to his fellow men, but it was only in endeavoring to lift them up to the elevated regions of greater purity in which he lived." This is also a decided step forward in artistic conception. Schiller considered the poet to be a creator, one who so lifted men out of themselves that they thought and felt as the poet desired. The reviewer catches this truth, but he sadly misses another when he gets into metaphysical realms. It cannot be asserted exactly what he means by the following, "In theory he derided nature and longed to depict the ideal." Let us hope that by nature he meant the realistic, the present state of society into which so much purblinding falsehood creeps, which Schiller did not wish to portray; by the ideal, society not as it is, but should be.

In a Review of W. Taylor's German Poetry Vol. III[#], Taylor is quoted as declaring Kotzebue "the greatest dramatist since Shakespeare." This comes from London and we naturally expect the opinion to be echoed in America. But not so. We are glad to note that the American critic had courage, for it took courage to have an original opinion in those days, to stand up for his own convictions and pronounce "the eulogy ridiculously extravagant." Taylor called Schiller

- American Quarterly Review-Vol. VII, 436. Historic Survey of German Poetry interspersed with various translations. By W. Taylor of Norwich. Vol. I, 1828, Vol. II, 1829.

the Aeschylus of Germany. The American critic claims that he merits being called the German Sophocles. He feels that Schiller will, of all the German Writers, most surely obtain enduring admiration. He is always noble, pure and dignified.

CHAPTER THREE.

Carlyle 1835.

On turning the dusty pages of those early American ancestors of ours, a feeling of shame is apt to creep over us that they fell so far short of the truth. Yet if we stop to consider the social, economic, political and, above all, religious conditions of their period, we are in a measure able to excuse them and turn aside from bemoaning their shortcomings to congratulate ourselves that when such an eminent scholar as Carlyle appeared and took the lead, they had the good sense to follow. Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* appeared in London in 1823. Ten years later Carlyle's "*Life of Schiller Comprehending an Examination of His Works*" was republished anonymously in Boston. Dr. Tollen who wrote the preface, nor any of the six^{##} reviewers of the "*Life*", were clear as to the author.

The first review appeared in *American Quarterly Review*, 1833, Vol. ¹⁹XVI. The writer cannot be identified. He closely follows Carlyle. "*The Robbers*" are attacked, however, for its supposed immoral and irreverent tendency. He discusses it quite at length and concludes that it is a youthful but powerful work of genius. "*Fiesco*" and *Cabale und Liebe*" he writes are the results of a more matured mind. "Grandeur, heroic wildness, serenity, enthusiastic tenderness characterize them both."

- Goodnight German Literature Prior to 1846; 99.

- See page 39.

Speaking of Schiller's and Goethe's friendship, he shows not so much their friendship as his personal opinion of the two men. Schiller is called Goethe's "equal in all the grander characteristics of mind and inferior only in extent and variety of their extremes."

His discussion of Schiller's "Thirty Years War" is the first worthy mention found of Schiller as an historian. The discussion, otherwise, is not of intrinsic value. The hand of Carlyle guides the hand of the American; the American says nothing original. However, it is important to note that he accepted and did not reject the foreign criticism. The reviewer states that "Schiller seems to have forgotten that special history, to be true to its aim, must as often be conversant with the minute and factional as with the general and collective exhibitions of nature-----This want of attention to particulars and a tendency occasionally to augment the relative weight of facts, is to be imputed the principal defect in Schiller in History". Notwithstanding these defects he adds that the value far outweighs the fault and allows as just the commendation which in Germany ranks the work in question as among the first of its historic monuments. Wallenstein is judged to exceed any other in length and sustained power. Of Maria Stuart, Bride of Messina, Maid of Orleans and William Tell, the chief glory is assigned to ~~the~~ Maid of Orleans, altho between this and William Tell opinion wavers. Of the remaining two, Schiller's biography considers ^{the} Bride of Messina as most deficient in point of construction, Maria Stuart wanting in "proper exhibition of manners and true historical delineation."

There were few statements made in the early part of the century which were not disputed. Carlyle settled some disputes, other

matters were, and still are, matters "de gustibus". As to which of Schiller's dramas is the greatest is a matter of taste.

In his criticism of Schiller as a metaphysician, the critic stands alone, and far from the truth, in his judgment that Schiller's thought was sometimes lost in a confused wandering among the abstract properties of mind and matter, and the effect lost and the heart not touched.

The critic concludes with the nearest approach to the understanding of Schiller as a man. The name of the writer cannot be identified but we may safely say from his summing up of Schiller's character that, if a New Englander, the old narrow view of life and religion did not influence him. He has outgrown the old prejudice against the stage. Since these old opinions are so rarely found, and favorable ones so much rarer, it is, perhaps, admissible to quote in full his conclusion. In speaking of his death he says, "The past revealed no spectres to torture or alarm him". Carlyle says, "In death itself, he was calmer and calmer." The American, like an old time southern orator, soars aloft and enlarges on this simple sentence. He continues, "His life had been spent with comparatively no taint of evil; it has been one splendid dream of the true and the beautiful which forbade to passion its sway. Indolence had never been nourished. No misconduct or perversion of powers claimed from him connance. In an elevation above the common wants and wishes which render our race the foes of each other, nursing the conceptions and feelings which make men glorious and devine, his aim had been mental perfection and virtue."

George Calvert of South Carolina, the translator of Don Carlos, 1834, reviewed Carlyle's Life of Schiller in 1833 in the North American Review, Vol. XXXIX, 163\|. F. H. Hedge also reviewed it in 1834 in the Christian Examiner Vol. XVI, 128. Calvert closely follows Carlyle and his article is, strictly speaking, a review. Hedge is independent and his article cannot properly be called a review.

Calvert briefly gives a sketch of Schiller's life and home influences, describes the conditions of his schooling, gives some of Carlyle's ideas of the whole, such as, "There is a mixture of the comic and sublime in the picture of the youth Schiller growing to manhood in the hands of the self complacent pedagogues of the Duke of Württemberg and the appearance of The Robbers as a consequence of their formal duelling can be aptly likened to the explosion of a mass of gun-powder under the noses of some ignorant boys, drying before the fire to be used as sand."

Hedge truly says that The Life is one of the few instances in which fairness was granted by an Englishman to a German. He has only one serious fault to find with Carlyle's criticism and thereby he betrays his birthplace, his New England training. This fault he finds in that Carlyle mentions Schiller's use of stimulants in a praiseworthy manner. Hedge thinks such a fault should be covered, or at least, condemned. Hedge came from the school which makes of the artist a perfect hero, a demi-god. As soon as he shows human frailty he is no longer the great artist. In his eyes, Schiller committed a gross error when, with a few friends he took a few glasses of beer. He could not understand the man

Schiller because he could not understand German customs and conventionalities. Calvert, after stating concisely the main facts of Schiller's life, gives a most plausible reason for just why the American critics had taken the stands they did, and why there were so many conflicting opinions and statements. He says, "Much it is to be regretted that the opinion (if the vague idea expressed by these names can be called such) entertained of these two men (Schiller and Goethe) by readers in this country should be drawn chiefly from the impressions made by 'The Robbers' and 'Werther', both produced when they were scarcely arrived at manhood and both the result of that morbid, inflamed state of mind into which young genius will lash itself." Hedge honors The Robbers with a much longer discussion than does Calvert. He believes it to be a work peculiar to its times "characterized by a spirit of fierce disquietude or a dissatisfaction with the whole mechanism of society and a presumptuous questioning of all that God or man has ordained." Nevertheless he considers The Robbers the least harmful of this class. "Weinse's Ardinshello is very impure, Werther is questionable, Faust still more so, but Schiller's Robbers never did injury to the morals of anyone." He admits that The Robbers have youthful extravagances, but contends that "none of his later works possess its glow and strength. The scene where Karl finds his father is "the sublimest conception in all Schiller's writings, one of the sublimest in the whole compass of literature." This is surely a departure from all previous and subsequent criticism on "The Robbers". It is unique and stands alone, fortunately. After these statements we are not surprised at any misstatement

this critic may see fit to make and are fully prepared to hear that William Tell has no faults but "wants the glow and strength to produce a strong impression," that Kabale und Liebe "has all The Robbers faults" but none of its strength, "clever", but unworthy of Schiller. Marquis Posa is a splendid person but too ideal for the drama. "Maria Stuart" is said to be less admired than any of Schiller's dramas on account of the undramatic nature of the subject Carlyle does not say this. He considers the drama a "beautiful tragedy; it would have formed the glory of a meaner man." Hedge says "The Maid of Orleans" is the most successful play, free from the faults of The Robbers, but not without the latter's fiery strength.

In the contemporary Review, London 1877, appeared an article which was reprinted in Living Age, Vol. 132, 350; which states that Schiller was "mastered by Kant". Calvert, in 1834, says, "Schiller in whom the tendency to metaphysical abstraction was so strong that had he not been a poet he would have been a metaphysician, became for a while a disciple of the Kantian doctrine. His was not a mind however to adopt a system, and he, in a short time discovered that he was not so enlightened as he at first thought." He quotes directly from Carlyle that the Essays on Grace and Dignity, on Naive and Sentimental Poetry, and the Letters on the Aesthetic Culture of Man, on Tragic Art, on the Pathetic, on the Cause of our Delight in Tragic Objects, on Employing the Low and Common in Art "were cast in the mould of Kanticism, or at least clothed in its garments."

Calvert makes the too broad statement that Shakespeare has lost nothing by Schiller's translations.

Hedge places Goethe, ~~H~~hland, Schlegel, Körner, and several others above Schiller as a lyric poet. "His minor poems", he says, "do not do him justice. 'Die Ideale' betrays too much personal feeling." He thinks "The Thirty Years War" unsurpassed, but that he "added nothing to philosophy" and "reason seems almost dormant," that he was often "eloquent but poetical", was capable of describing nature "but in such a manner as to convince his readers that Nature ne'er could find a way into his heart. Hedge who regrets, showing that the line from the calvinist and Roundheads is not yet broken, that Schiller was not a "moral poet", not a "prophet nor a seer".

CHAPTER FOUR.

After Carlyle (1833-1846)

After Carlyle's Life of Schiller had appeared, Schiller's position in both England and America was assured. There were still unfavorable criticisms, but on the other hand, the pendulum swung too far and some of Schiller's admirers became over-enthusiastic. C. Beck, a German by birth, is among these. In a review[#], appearing in 1836, of "S. W. Haven's Translations of Letters Auxiliary to the History of Polite Literature, by Heinrich Heine", he does not mention Schiller except in connection with the end of Goethe's life, when Goethe had "lived long enough to see enemies rise up on all sides and advance the most adverse charges against him, the principal ones of which were that his poems were without moral tendency, and that he presented no noble forms, but only vulgar figures while Schiller, on the contrary, had exhibited ideal characters of the noblest order and was therefore the greater poet." Mrs. E. F. Ellett, of South Carolina, who did more than any other woman^{##} to make Schiller known and appreciated in America, collected, and had published in book form, some of her magazine articles on Schiller's characters.^{###} In May 1837, the Knickerbocker accepted from her a criticism on "Maria Stuart."

^{##}-Goodnight. German Literature in America Prior to 1846. 100.

^{###}-Characters of Schiller. Mrs. E. F. Ellett. Carter Hendee & Co.

Boston.

^{###}-Knickerbocker, Vol. IX, 433..

[#] - North American Review Vol. 43, 178.

She says, "The subject of Maria Stuart is scarcely a favorite one for dramatic composition-----with all these disadvantages, Schiller's work, in plan and in exposition, is truly noble and worthy of the subject, and to say this is to accord it all praise." She thinks that Schiller's characters are true to history. Carlyle, a loyal Englishman, naturally thought the character of "Good Queen Bess" a little distorted. Mrs. Ellett says Elizabeth is represented by Schiller as not having a "single good trait"; selfish and haughty in the extreme. Objection must be raised to this, for Schiller never depicted a woman without a single good trait. Schiller's Elizabeth and the original had many excellent qualities. Burleigh is savage, Leicester, "feeble and simulating", Paulet "stern but upright", all painted "strikingly and discriminatingly". She criticizes Schiller for not ending the play with the death of Maria Stuart, "for it is all important to the effect of a tragedy that the strongest emotions excited should remain in their first strength and vividness."

During the American Revolution the French had been brought into closer personal contact with the South than with the North so that in the South the French influence prevailed. The University of Virginia, especially, altho, as we have noted above, the first University in the new world to call a native German to its faculty, yet was greatly under the influence of the French.

F. J. Grund, a German, who visited America in and before 1836, wrote an account of this country which is valuable in that it shows some of the differences, as given by an unbiased foreigner, between the two leading sections of the country. Only

by appreciating the marked difference between these two sections can we account for their varying opinions. He praises the intellect of the Boston ladies and then proceeds to say, "The ladies of Philadelphia and the South possess other advantages not less conspicuous and attractive. Theirs is the province of the graces and the fine arts. I can safely affirm that I have heard as good amateur concerts in Charleston and Philadelphia as in any part of France or Germany-----Drawing and painting are also much more cultivated than they are to the North. And foreign tongues, especially French and Spanish are spoken with greater fluency."

Mrs. Ellett was not a southern by birth, but lived for a number of years in South Carolina and numbered among her personal friends some of the leaders in Southern education. In her conception of the drama which is essentially French, we see the southern influence.

In 1836 in the Southern Literary Messenger, Vol. II, 702, Mrs. Ellett compared the Filippo of Alfieri with the Don Carlos of Schiller. She claims not to have seen nor heard of Calvert's translation which had appeared two years before. She finds the Italian play superior in the simplicity of the monarch but in other respects, prefers Schiller as more poetic and more to her taste.[#]

Longfellow in his Journal and Correspondence takes about the same stand. He writes "I have been reading today Schiller's Don Carlos.' It is more poetical than Alfieri's 'Filippo' but not

[#] - Goodnight. German Literature in America Prior to 1846, 101.

so simply tragic. Alfieri's tragedy is the drop of deadly poison in a ring; Schiller's is the same diluted and drunk from a silver chased goblet. Schiller's is a very noble poem, affluent in thought and diction but too long and too intricate for a tragedy. The real tragic muse hardly stops to pluck so many flowers by the way." John S. Dwight[#] believes that sooner or later Schiller will be given a higher place than Goethe. The New York Review calls Schiller's *Das Lied von der Glocke* "the finest lyric in any language."

Margaret Fuller wrote,^{##} "I don't like Goethe so well as Schiller now. I mean I am not so happy in reading him. That perfect wisdom and merciless nature seems cold after those seducing pictures of farms more beautiful than truth." Again she writes^{###}, "Your Schiller has already given me great pleasure. I have been reading the revolt in the Netherlands with intense interest and have reflected much upon it. The volumes are numbered on my little bookcase and as the eye runs over them I thank the kindly heart that put so much genius and passion within my power." Thus, after 1853, tribute after tribute was paid to Schiller. Other examples would be needless repetition. There was little technical criticism but much appreciative discourse. This, perhaps, is even more valuable than technical discussion, for it better shows the real feeling.

[#] - North American Review, Vol. 48, 505.

^{##} - Margaret Fuller's Journal, Boston.

^{###} - Clarke's Memorials of Margaret Fuller, 134. Boston.

Dr. Charles Tollen undoubtedly did more to make Schiller known in America than did any other critic, except Carlyle. Some of the lectures he had given at Harvard his wife had published in book form after his death.[#]

8 After a short account of Schiller's life he then takes up the eight dramas chronologically, gives a detailed, connected account of each one with translated extracts.

This book finished what the North American Review had begun. The Review brought the public to the point where they could understand Carlyle and accept him. Carlyle moulded the after thought. Tollen assured the reading people of the nation that Schiller had much for each one. Carlyle is for the student. Tollen is for the general reader. One who does not know German can get as good an understanding of Schiller by reading Tollen's book as can be gotten outside of an acquaintance with the original. In technical points and historical facts Tollen does not differ from Carlyle. He disagrees only on a few minor matters of taste. Both agree on the character of Earl Moor, a noble nature, misunderstood, who rushes on from bad to worse. Tollen states that Earl is finally saved by Amalia's life. Carlyle makes no such statement. Tollen finds no blemish in Earl. Carlyle sees the good as well as the bad. Francis is called by Tollen a villain of an "original and highly interesting type." Carlyle calls him "an amplified copy of Jago and Richard, but the copy is distorted as well as amplified.

- Schiller's Life and Dramas. By Dr. Chas. Tollen. Boston.

Hilliard Gray & Co., 1841.

There is no air of reality in Francis". Follen quotes Schlegel's saying that Richard is the original of Francis altho"ennobled by none of those qualities which in Richard mingled admiration with abhorrence." Follen denies to Richard any ennobling qualities except" great ingenuity and astonishing bravery." Follen, while denying that Francis Moor is a copy of Richard, says that he has these two qualities but that "his bravery is displayed in another field, his heroism and tactics are exhibited in fighting the enemy within, sometimes by boldly giving battle, sometimes by wisely avoiding it." We see nothing noble nor heroic in Francis. His bravery was the effrontery of the coward.

Schiller speaks of the Robber Moor as a "character who perhaps may embarrass many a reader." Follen disagrees with Schiller and says, "The character of Karl Moor is easily understood." Nevertheless, Follen gives in a few words, the best summing up of Francis which we find. "The great end of all his actions is not by his reasoning powers, but by the uncontrolled impulse of sensual nature which craves absolute dominion." This is certainly as true a pen sketch of Richard as of Francis. Follen says later, in discussing the two main villains of "Cabale und Liebe" that neither is such a prodigy of consistent wickedness as Francis Moor." Yet he quotes Schlegel, "It will always impair the perfection of a drama if the poet cannot do without a villain, and if he is obliged to derive the greatness of the distress from that of the crime. Shakespeare's *Jago*, and Lady Macbeth, and Schiller's Francis Moor prove the truth of this assertion." In dealing with "Cabale und Liebe" Follen again takes up arms against Schlegel and this time

defeats him. Schlegel says "'Cabale und Liebe', with its overstrained sentimentality, can hardly touch us, tho it cannot fail to torment us by painful impressions." Tollen grants some of Louisa's speeches to be overstrained sentimentality, but objects to judging the whole play by a few speeches. He gives us a fair summing up of all the characters, showing that in each there is much good and bad; in some, one trait predominates, and vice versa. None are perfection, none are wholly villains. Ferdinand, thru love of his son, allows ambition to take him too far. Wurm's redeeming trait is that he loved Louisa. Lady Milford finally conquers her pride and frees Ferdinand. Miller, the coarse and rough, is good and honest. To prove the consistency of Miller's character in opposition to a statement made by Doering that the Miller of the first act is not the Miller of the last act, Tollen quotes the rough opening scene and the scenes near the end where Miller shows his uncultured delight over the gold. Tollen grants that "Cabale und Liebe" cannot fail to torment us by fearful impressions but claims, justly that these impressions do not come from the direct display of suffering. Death, which put an end to the misunderstanding, alleviates the pain of beholding the most painful scene, the dying scene of Louisa and Ferdinand. Tollen gives a full sketch of Fiesco and says this will suffice for a critical discussion. He states that it is "dramatized history", rather than "historical drama." "The drama should have its interest centered upon one object that should give decided character to the whole. In Fiesco, the action is too divided. There are too many main characters." If, for these reasons, this is no drama, then

neither is Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. The unity of action does not necessarily center around one main object but around some truth or truths which the dramatist desires to express. In Fiesco the attention is not so divided as to destroy the interest of the whole, the conflict of the two parties.

Verrina is another Brutus, Fiesco is another Caesar, and Leonora is another Julia of Shakespeare. Follen attempts to defend him for substituting other scenes for Shakespeare's witches. He says, "Schiller has clothed them with tragic dignity which Schlegel condemns as an absurd attempt to ennoble what is essentially base."

Follen is as enthusiastic over Schiller as Schlegel was over Shakespeare. In their admiration they over-praise.

Schlegel says the witches were more in keeping with the times. Follen says that Schiller gave vice the resemblance of virtue to heighten the effect. The theory may be good, but the object of the drama is to produce by its action a certain impression upon the spectators. The lamb, if a wolf in disguise, must not be so disguised that he appear as a lamb from first to last, but at some moment he must show his wolf nature.

Follen concludes his book with a dramatic sketch of Schiller himself and interprets to America for the first time the meaning of the word "Freedom." The land of the free was not the land of the free. There was religious toleration under the law; by the constitution all men were equal, but the clergy so bound the minds and feelings of the people that they were not free to think undisturbedly. Dr. Leo Rosser, a member of the Methodist Episcopal

Church South, was tried by his brethren for playing the game of nine pins. Freedom, as Schiller preached it, was opposed to all their established ways of thinking. "Crucify the flesh!" was their cry. "Schiller proclaimed the Gospel of freedom; I would not allow the rights of nature to be encroached upon." Tollen quotes Goethe. "Freedom", he explains, "~~is~~ here in the sense of Kant's philosophy, was synonymous with the moral nature of man."[#] Again he says, "Freedom and love, the two elements of our moral nature, of true humanity, are the living springs of Schiller's poetry."^{##}

If Tollen had brought America no other message from Schiller than this message of freedom the debt would still be too large to pay.

In July, 1844, appeared a critical notice in the Knickerbocker, Vol. 24, 64, which stated that, "the volume under review, the poems and ballads of Schiller translated by Sir Edward Lytton, N. Y., Harpers, 1844, has long been desired." The task, he says, of translating the "great German" is "Herculean", but surprisingly well accomplished. Nevertheless, he wishes that the book had been made to consist of previous translations "edited" by Bulwer. "He (Bulwer) has endeavored to do too much and has failed altogether." On the other hand, he recommends this stupendous failure to "every lover of the German and of the productions of one of the most distinguished bards who has written in that comprehensive and difficult language."

- cf Tollen's Life of Schiller, 388.

- cf Tollen's Life of Schiller, 398.

George Calvert's translation of Goethe and Schiller's letters (1794-1805) caused much comment in both northern and southern magazines. Knickerbocker, May, 1845 says, "We witness the relaxation of Giants, we can figure what may be the spirits of gods." This little notice is so far ahead of the time when Kotzebue was the only Giant that it needs no comment. On the face of it, it shows the estimation Schiller, as well as Goethe, has come to be held.

Altho Carlyle thru his book, and the six Americans thru their able reviews of it, had gradually convinced many that in Schiller could be found inestimable treasure, yet for years, there were some both in England and America, who held rigidly to the criticism which had appeared in the early part of the century. As late as 1877 we find the following remarks in the Living Age copied from the Contemporary Review. "Schiller, the younger and second king, strenuous, ardent, eager, supplied stimulus and compelled his greater, calmer friend to activity and productivity." It is a non-disputed fact that Goethe wrote without previous discussion with Schiller, but that Schiller on the contrary, during the years of their friendship often spoke with Goethe freely. Calvert in 1844 has set us right in regard to the following. "Goethe mastered Kant. Schiller was mastered by Kant."

Among other notices in 1851 we find one in the Knickerbocker Vol. 37, 357 on "The Song of the Bell" which shows conditions sometime previous to this year, and throws light upon the end of our period. The critic knows of but three other translations of "The Song of the Bell", Bulver's, Dwight's, and Eliot's. He had

read in the Christian Examiner a discussion of Sothby's translation and is not desirous of further knowledge. He calls "The Song of the Bell" the best lyric ever printed. The following is particularly interesting. "It was," he says, "our good fortune to obtain at an early age, possession of Dwight's priceless volumes of the minor poems of Goethe and Schiller at a period when Chile Harold (1818) Chrislobel (1816), Thanatopsis, and The Excursion were unknown; the Diver and Ritter Toggenburg were as household words."

In 1844 there appeared in the North American Review an article tracing the development of German poetry from its beginnings.[#] The writer, in an interesting comparison of Goethe and Schiller, shows the advance which criticism has made since the first critic compared these two poets.^{##} "Goethe", he says, "was an artist, nothing more nor less. Schiller wrote History and dabbled in metaphysics, tho he had no talent for pure speculation and his history is little better than fiction-----If Goethe was an epic poet, Schiller was a born dramatist.-----The nature of Schiller was in harmony with the tendencies of his times. He was patriotic and struggled for freedom. The poetry of Schiller is subjective; that of Goethe objective. Schiller adores freedom. Goethe adores nature-----Schiller was a priest of the ideal, Goethe was an interpreter of the known world."

[#]-North American Review. Vol. 58, 79. Review of Geschichte der poetischen Nationallitteratur der Deutschen. Von G. G. Gervinus. 3 Bde. Leipzig, 1840-42; Neuere Geschichte der poetischen Nationallitteratur der Deutschen. Von G. G. Gervinus. 2 Bde. Leipzig, 1840-42. By. J. M. Mackie. ^{##}-cf page 8.

SUMMARY.

In the foregoing chapters I have endeavored by following the studies of Bancroft, Everett, Calvert, Hedge, and others, to show the development of the study of Schiller in America.

We have seen that, before the publication of the North American Review (1815), the works of Schiller were unknown, due not so much to inexcusable ignorance as to politically and socially insurmountable obstacles; also, we have seen that when things at home grew more peaceful and prosperous, such men as Calvert, Bancroft and others, went to Germany and returned greatly changed by German influence. Prof. Barrett Wendell[#] calls this period (1815-1833) the period of New England Renaissance. Previous to the North American Review there was such a dearth of literature that the term renaissance cannot truthfully be used. If America has produced any literature, worthy the name, it has been in no small degree thru the study of German literature. Altho the influences, both foreign and native, have been innumerable, yet we may safely say, that German literature, when in its highest state of classical development, was the chief influence in producing an American literature.

The publication of Carlyle's Life of Schiller (1833) gave rise to articles dealing with Schiller and his work in some of the leading magazines of the South, among which were the Southern Rose, The Southern Literary Journal, Southern Literary Messenger. These

- B. Wendell, Literary History of America, 325. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York, 1901.

periodicals contributed greatly to the spread of Schiller-literature just before and immediately after the publication of Carlyle's Life of Schiller. It is much to be regretted that it has been impossible to procure more material from these magazines for we have observed that the early criticisms of Schiller's works show better than any other one place in our literary history, the differences between the, at that time, two leading sections of the country, the North and the South.

During and after, the time which we are examining we found almost without exception that the leading Unitarians and Transcendentalists were the men of letters who were German scholars and students of Schiller. Transcendentalism, expressed in a few words, is the conviction that man is divine as well as human; the belief in the divinization of man. This is not the theory of "original sin" but the doctrine which Schiller taught and the transcendentalists believed, namely, that human nature is essentially good. Obey thyself and you need not fear was the motto of the transcendentalist.

Since the book markets of America were stocked with English reprints, it is difficult to reach a definite conclusion concerning what the Americans, themselves, thought of Schiller. His plays were popular and the translations of his works began early to be widely read. Just how these translations were received by the majority of readers is not to be ascertained, for the criticism comes from a limited and prejudiced class.

The early American critics had not the first requisites of poetic appreciation for they could not, as the true interpreter

must do, penetrate deeply down to the moment when thought came to the poet, see as he saw, think as he thought, become with him, for the moment, one in spirit. Not until a few leaders went to Germany and came directly in touch with German life, not until Blaeterman, Follen and Lieber made their homes among us were the American students of Schiller able to grasp the interpretations, given by Carlyle, or to seize for themselves the richness of the foreign poet and make his wealth their own.

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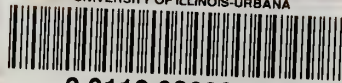
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